

Washington, DC – U.S. Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) congratulated the San Antonio Youth Centers and the Alamo City YouthBuild program on receiving a \$687,500 grant to educate and train at-risk young people in San Antonio.

“Our youth need three things to succeed in life: hope, resources and support,” said Congressman Ciro Rodriguez. “San Antonio Youth Centers has a long and successful track record of providing those tools to young people so they can work toward improving their own lives. I commend the U.S. Department of Labor under the leadership of Secretary Hilda Solis for recognizing and funding this important program.”

YouthBuild is a nine-month program that works with youth ages 16 to 24 who have dropped out of school. Students spend half their time attaining a GED or high school diploma and the other half working toward a workforce skills certification. CEO Cynthia Le Monds said the Department of Labor grant will fund the Construction Corps, where students attain a national certification in construction. The young people will build or rehabilitate affordable housing for low-income and homeless families in their own neighborhoods.

“We aim to serve approximately 115 students in the coming year through various YouthBuild programs,” Le Monds said.

San Antonio Youth Centers was founded in 1984 in the basement of St. Mary’s Catholic church in downtown San Antonio as the “St. Mary’s Youth Drop-In Center.” It has since grown to an organization of seven community centers with a budget of \$2.7 million. San Antonio Youth Centers **serves more than 1,200 youth ages 5 to 24 (and their families) each year.** **The program participants are 52 percent male, 48 percent female; 64 percent are Hispanic, 19 percent are African American, 15 percent are Anglo and 2 percent other. Half the participants come from single parent households and 42 percent of the youth we serve live in households with an annual income of less than \$5,000.**

#